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COLUMBIA TRAIN HELD UP.

EXPRESS CAR ROBBED AT 58, NEAR BRANCHVILLE.

Fifty-Eight is the Station Where a Train was Robbed Two Years Ago—A Band of Seven or Eight Men Engaged in the Robbery—Local Express Robbed and the Through Express Safe Taken Off the Train, which is then Allowed to Proceed.

[Special to News and Courier.]

Branchville, January 27.—A carefully planned and audacious express robbery took place on the Southern Railway this evening when the passenger train from Charleston reached nearly the exact site of the successful raid of two years ago, near Fifty-eight Station, five miles from Branchville. Seven men, or possibly eight, were riding on the platform between the engine and baggage car, concealed by the darkness. None was masked. At the fifty-five mile board two men crawled over the tender and covered the engineer, John Reynolds, with Winchester. They fired two shots, one ball passing through Reynolds's cap. Fireman Cobb escaped by jumping off. Conductor Black, who ran out, was also covered and ordered back. By order of these men a brakeman uncoupled the express, mail and baggage cars, which were taken to Fifty-eight Station, leaving the rest of the cars on the track. At Fifty-eight several shots were fired into the express car and one man, climbing up, covered Express Messenger Hall with a Winchester, compelling him to open the door. Three men entered the car and stripped the local safe. After threatening Hall with instant death if he did not open the through line safe, and finding he knew nothing of the combination, the safe was rolled out on the platform. Then the engineer was ordered to return with the three cars to the train and he obeyed, bringing the train with no further incidents to Branchville. Nothing was seen of the men or the safe on passing the station. There was only a small amount of booty in the local safe and no one here knows the contents of the through safe. No mail or baggage was touched and no passenger molested. The robbers took their pistols from the only employees who were armed and resistance was out of the question. No measures in the line of pursuit have been taken so far. It is hoped that bloodhounds will be on hand in the morning.

ANOTHER ACCOUNT.

Columbia, January 27.—There was the time when train robberies were always credited to the far West, but they are getting common just about Station 58, on the South Carolina and Georgia division of the Southern Railway. Tonight there occurred there, for the third time in a year or two, a glaring hold up. First there was the Bartow Warren case, in December, 1899, when \$1,600 was stolen. Then there was the abortive hold up in October, 1891, and tonight there occurred the chief robbery of all. It was as well planned and as boldly executed as ever described in the Nick Carter series. Every detail seemed to have been carefully mapped out. It took more than an hour to carry through the whole robbery, but no chances were taken at any time. The robbery and hold up was of the regular night train from Charleston for Columbia, leaving Charleston at 5.10, and arriving here at 10.25 at night. Tonight the train did not arrive here until considerably after 11 o'clock. The cause of the delay being that the band of robbers bold and deliberately interfered with the traffic for more than an hour.

STOPPING THE TRAIN.

About 52 or 54 miles from Charleston, and quite near Branchville, three men crawled over the rear end of the tender, over coal and all, to use their influence to have the train stopped. They talked to the colored fireman first, and told him they wanted the train stopped. The colored fireman told Capt. John Reynolds, the engineer, that some men wanted him to stop the train. Engineer Reynolds asked the fireman what it

was he said. The fireman repeated the message. The negro insisted that the men wanted the train stopped and Capt. Reynolds said he was not stopping the train. Then there came a pistol shot, then a rifle shot, and then a bullet grazed the veteran engineer's skull cap. He looked around and saw three men at his side. He wanted to get out of the cab and leaned out to get out of the range of subsequent bullets. The fireman had jumped and was running for dear life. Capt. Reynolds came to the conclusion that discretion was the better part of valor, and he did not see any use to jeopardize the engine, and to save the property and possibly a wreck he stuck to the engine and did as nearly as he could what he was ordered to at the point of a rifle. At first there were three men on the engine with him, but later on two remained, and at no time was he without the company of one of the robbers and his rifle. In fact, the guard over him got quite talkative and said that he was there to do nothing but watch him and make him obey orders. When the engineer stopped the train the man asked for the colored fireman and said that they wanted him to uncouple the train. The fireman had gone, so the men had to get down and go back to do the work. They uncoupled, but the hooks caught, and they cried out to their lieutenant to have the cars slacked back. This was done, the mail, baggage and express cars detached and taken off from the passenger section of the train; meanwhile the other members of the band were keeping things lively with their rifles and oaths.

ROBBING THE EXPRESS CAR.

As soon as the front coaches were detached and a volley or two had been fired a squad of men made for the express car. While the car was being hauled off Express Messenger A. V. Hall was trying to get things in shape, not knowing what was going on outside. He blew out one of his lamps and was getting over to the door to blow out the other light when a pistol suddenly appeared on the bright side. The hand that carried the pistol had smashed its way through the glass door of the car. Mr. Hall was directed to open the car door. He thought there was nothing else to do, as he was alone and had no means of protection. Then one of the men jumped into the car and there came another. Messenger Hall was told to go over in a corner and sit down. He was accompanied to his corner by a man and a pistol, and told to keep his back turned. Once he turned his head slightly to get an idea of what was going on and he was promptly reminded by the chilliness of the pistol at his temple that if he turned his head much further it would lead to trouble. The other men in the car, too, it is thought, went through the local safe and took therefrom all the money it contained, about \$13. Then they wanted Messenger Hall to open the through safe. He told them that he could not do so. They insisted, and he told them plainly that the through safe was locked in Charleston and that he did not know what it contained, that he did not have the combination to it, and that it could only be opened at its destination and then not by him. The robbers evidently knew this was correct. They had the section pulled up to the station house at Fifty-eight, and were explicit as to the exact point they wanted the car taken, and when they got there they unloaded the through safe, weighing five or six hundred pounds, into a wagon that was in waiting and hauled it to some place they had, no doubt, selected to blow it open. The contents of the through safe could not be ascertained. Sometimes it contains a great deal of money and at other times but little. The exact amount could only be ascertained at the Charleston office, where the safe is made up and locked, and no one here seemed to know what was in the safe. After the robbers left the car they unloaded the express messenger's pistols and returned them to him with their compliments.

THE FLAGMAN'S STORY.

One of the most connected and best stories for the whole affair is that told by Drayton Shirer, the intelligent flagman who went through the whole experience and who came very near being killed. He says that he thought there was something the matter with the air brake when he heard the noise and he went ahead to inquire into it. As he got up to the express car he heard the shooting, and the three men who were walking on the ground cried to him that he had better get inside or they would kill him. He called to Baggage Master J. W. Butler, who let him in the baggage car, and just as he got inside a bullet came crashing through the side of the car just over his head. Mr. Shirer told the men that he wanted to go to the rear end of the car, as there was a freight train behind. His appeal to get back to protect the train did no good. By this time he was in the baggage car and the train was disconnected and he was taken on ahead about two miles and the passenger part of the train was left behind. The men kept up a constant fusillade and all the time were insisting that it would be dangerous for any one to show their heads, and they cursed like troopers and called each other Mike and Pat, and all orders were to Mike and Pat.

Mr. Shirer says that the men he saw had black faces, but he and the others are of the impression that they were white men who had blackened their faces. Conductor Black, who was in charge of the train, heard the firing, and before he could get up to the head of the train the front cars were detached and carried away. As his flagman had been carried off in the front section he had to protect his rear end from the freight train that was behind, and he gave that his personal attention, and when the engine backed up and got the train connected he went on to Branchville and reported the occurrence.

Mr. Fair, who was in charge of the mail car, did not open his car door, nor was he anxious to have any communication with the robbers. They knocked at his door and he did not answer. And they left him alone and he left them alone and nothing on his car was interfered with.

THE BAGGAGE MASTER'S STORY.

Baggage Master J. W. Butler tells a good story about the robbers. All the way coming up he was "cussing" the heavy drummers' trunks that he had to handle, but when the firing began he thought the drummers and their trunks were a God send to him, and he and Mr. Shiver did not hesitate to use them as barricades against the fusillade.

WHAT MESSENGER HALL SAYS.

Express Messenger Hall had a short but a lively story. As he was made to keep his back to the robbers he could not tell much about them nor what they did. He gave a complete story of the occurrence to the express authorities, who are already at work on the matter. He thinks that there were certainly five, and possibly eight, in the band of robbers.

THE ENGINEER'S ADVENTURE.

The most picturesque story is that of Engineer John Reynolds. He put no frills on his story. He is one of the oldest and best engineers on the road and tells how he weighed the whole matter, and decided that it was the best for him to remain at his post and not try to be funny. As soon as the men got on his cab they examined him to make sure that he had no pistol, and examined his spectacle case to see that it was not a pistol case. One of the men told him that the shot which cut his cap was accidental, and that they would not harm a hair on him for the world, and assured him.

One of the men called him by name and another referred to him as "Uncle Johnny," his nickname. It was evident that the men or some of them knew him very well. Capt. Reynolds says that he did not know any one of the three men on the cab with him, but that they all looked like natives, and that one of the men

looked like what he would call a Goose Creeker—sallow-faced and dark-complexioned. All three of the men he saw were white. None of them wore masks or had their faces blackened, and they talked freely with him. One of the men sat at his side for over an hour and after the through safe had been removed he told the engineer to go back and get his train, and he remained on the cab until the engine had gone back fully half a mile, when he told the engineer to slack up and let him get off. He made the engineer go back fully half a mile from the main body of the party and the safe before he got off, and then Mr. Reynolds went slowly back to take up the passenger section. Flagman Shirer protected the rear of the bob tail car as it went back to pick up the passengers, who were no doubt, greatly puzzled at all that was happening about two miles off. Mr. Reynolds described the men as being "ordinally country folks" as far as he could judge by their appearance, dress and language. There were certainly five, and very likely eight or nine, in the party of robbers.

BARTOW WARREN SUSPECTED.

There is a strong supposition from the features of the case that J. Bartow Warren has something to do with the robbery. It will be remembered that he was tried some time ago for an express robbery, but the prosecution resulted in a mistrial. After the trial Warren shot and killed Thomas Watson, who was one of the witnesses against him. The killing occurred in the streets of Branchville and although rewards are out for Warren's arrest he has not been captured. It is said people about Branchville have seen him in the vicinity and he is suspected as being in hiding in that neighborhood.

EFFORTS TO CATCH THE ROBBERS.

Mr. Richardson took the matter up with Governor McSweeney tonight and Governor McSweeney immediately offered a reward of \$400 for the arrest of the parties connected with the robbery. Superintendent Sadler will go to the scene and be there by daybreak in the morning. The Southern Railway and express detective force went to work at once on the case. Bloodhounds were telegraphed for and the sheriffs of Dorchester and Orangeburg counties were asked to do what they could, and possums are reported to have been organized at Branchville and Reevesville, and they are said to be out scouring the country to get a clue to the robbers. It is reported that the party drove off in the direction of Walterboro. To-morrow Governor McSweeney will communicate with all of the sheriffs in the vicinity and ask them to do all they can to arrest the robbers, for the peace and dignity of the State.

BULLET HOLES IN THE CARS.

The baggage, express and mail cars bear testimony to the night's experience. There are a number of bullet holes in both sides of each. All of them seem to have been made with Winchester rifle bullets. The general impression among the train crew is that the robbers got on the train and secreted themselves while the train stopped at St. George or Reevesville. It is not certain at which station the men secreted themselves on the train but they seem to have done so pretty effectively. The men had plenty of ammunition, which they used freely. And they were profuse and violent in their oaths.

The Express Company will do everything within its power to capture the robbers, but no shipper will lose anything. No express freight other than two safes were interfered with. The robbery will compare in boldness and execution with any in express annals.

DUMPED SAFE IN THE EDISTO—FORCED A NEGRO TO TURN OVER WAGON TO THEM—SAFE RECOVERED INTACT.

[Special to The State.]

Branchville, Jan. 28.—There are no developments in the express robbery which occurred near 58 last night except the finding of the safe in the Edisto river this morning.

Pinckney Carson, a negro living near the scene of the robbery was forced under penalty of death to haul the safe to the river. The negro Carson was asked about the robbery this morning and admitted that he had been forced to haul the safe away and piloted Superintendent Sadler and others to the river about four miles from where the robbery occurred, where the safe was found. The robbers failed to get into the safe and had tied a rope to it and threw it into the river. It is thought that they were afraid of being caught if they kept on hauling the safe and threw it into the river intending to return later, open the safe and get their booty.

Of course there are suppositions, but so far as known there is no actual clue as to who the robbers were.

Sheriff Dukes and his deputies returned home this afternoon.

STORY OF THE RECOVERY OF SAFE FROM STREAM.

The dispatch given above briefly tells of the recovery of the through safe taken from the car and hauled away in a wagon by the train robbers. It was known here early yesterday that the safe had been found in the river; that it had not been broken open and that its contents were secure. The amount of those contents has never been made public. Some say that it was large; the express officials convey the idea that it was small.

At 1 o'clock yesterday morning Messrs. Sadler and Richardson and several other express officials went to the scene of the trouble. They were accompanied by two Columbia detectives, Messrs. Bishop and McCabe, and Dr. Stanford and Coroner Green with the fine pair of bloodhounds owned by Dr. Stanford. At Kingville the five bloodhounds from the State farm were picked up, making seven in all.

"Fifty-Eight" was reached before daylight and Charleston, Augusta and Charlotte detectives were there. Coroner Green and Mr. Stanford returned in the afternoon with the Columbia dogs. Mr. Green tells of the day's work.

A CAREFUL NEGRO.

The detectives were not at work long before they found a negro living near the depot, who said that the men had made him turn over his wagon to haul the safe. He told them that they had carried the safe to a point six miles away on the river, and had there dumped the safe into the river and left. He had followed them though ordered not to do so, to see that the mule was not overdriven or taken away altogether. When he came up to the river bank they forced him to help them unload the safe. He says he only saw three men; they were white men, but he did not know them. They shot two or three times when they first came to his place. The negro's story is conflicting in some respects and the officers believe he knows more about the affair than he told. He has been arrested in consequence.

WANTED TO HIDE TREASURE.

The officers made the negro pilot them to the spot where the safe was dumped in the river. It was about five feet from the bank under six feet of water, but could be seen. A rope had been tied around it and the end fastened two feet under water at the bank. The officers got a larger rope around the safe and managed to pull it out, finding that it had not been opened.

The men evidently intended to come back at some time, pull up the safe and blow it open.

THE DOGS.

The Columbia hounds were at once put out for a run. They caught the scent and followed a trail down the river to a boat landing where there were two empty boats moored. There they lost the trail. The State farm dogs were tried then and they did the same thing. For the time being the use of the dogs was abandoned. The detectives, however, have gone ahead scouring the country.

THE SAFE OPENED.

The safe was then loaded on a

wagon and taken back to "58," where the express officials opened it and removed the contents. They told none what the contents were. The safe was in good condition though some water had oozed in.

Mr. Green says the people in the vicinity seemed disposed to aid in the chase in every way, readily furnishing meals, horses, wagons, pistols, guns, etc.

The safe was located and recovered at 8:45 o'clock.

Messrs. Richardson and Sadler remained at the scene.

Up to an early hour this morning on news of the capture or location of the robbers had reached Columbia.

WHAT THE GOVERNOR DID.

When the matter was reported to the governor on Monday night that official determined that the robbers should be captured if such a thing were possible. He thought it safest for a posse to take the trail at the scene with the bloodhounds and for sheriffs forming a circle about the scene to become active on the outer edges. He thereupon wired the sheriffs of Colleton, Dorchester, Orangeburg and Charleston as follows:

"Do all in your power to assist in capture of express robbers who held up Southern railway train near Branchville night of 27th. Organize posse if necessary and use every endeavor to capture while trail is fresh. Reward of \$400 offered for capture guilty parties. Advise by wire of your movements and any information you may be able to obtain."

A telegram making a request of the sheriff of Richmond county, Ga., and the detective force of Augusta was also sent.

The sheriff of Charleston yesterday morning answered as follows:

Telegram received. Will act immediately as directed.

J. Elmore Martin.

Sheriff.

At 10:28 a. m., from Orangeburg, the following was received:

Your telegram received. Sheriff Dukes and W. Hampton Dukes, deputy sheriff are now with a posse on trail of robbers who held up Southern Railway train near Branchville. Will keep you advised of movements, etc.

Alex. W. Tharin,

Sheriff's Office.

At 10:48 from Orangeburg came the following gratifying News:

Got safe out river. Not broken. Dogs on trail.

Alex. W. Tharin,

Sheriff's Office.

The Modern Pirate.

In Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly for February, Carl Hovey has much that is entertaining to tell of the Water Front of Greater New York. The true river pirate, he says, is really a modest-seeming gentleman, in charge of his own saloon, "hop joint," or waterside lodging house. He stands well with the police, although he has "done his bit" in prison for felonies. One well-known character, whose name it would hardly be fair to print, is so fond of telling a certain little story, however, that almost any one who drops into his place and makes the proper salaam to the distinguished old rascal may hear it.

"I'll tell you how my hair turned white," he begins, with an indefinite slyness of manner. "I was learning my trade as a shoemaker out in Trenton, in Jersey, when a copper comes into the prison shop and looks me over. Thinks I, 'He's after me for that job I did in Hoboken. My God! he's going to put me away again after I get out of here.' It was only a minute he looked me over, and then went on as if he didn't know me. But just in that time my hair turned white as snow."

Saves Two From Death.

Our little daughter had an almost fatal attack of whooping cough and bronchitis," writes Mrs. W. K. Haviland, of Armonk, N. Y., "but, when all other remedies failed, we saved her life with Dr. King's New Discovery. Our niece, who had contumacious in an advanced stage, also used this wonderful medicine and to-day she is perfectly well. Desperate throat and lung diseases yield to Dr. King's New Discovery as to no other medicine on earth. Infallible for coughs and colds. 50c and \$1.00 guaranteed by all druggists. Trial bottles free.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION.

To Investigate the Affairs of the State Dispensary.

Following is the text of the concurrent resolution to investigate the affairs of the State dispensary:

Whereas, there are rumors being circulated charging a lack of business methods in the purchasing of wines and liquors by the State board of directors of the dispensary; and whereas, it is due to the State and to the State board of directors that the said rumors should be investigated; therefore be it resolved:

Section 1. That a committee consisting of two on the part of the senate, to be appointed by the president of the senate, and three on the part of the house, to be appointed by the speaker of the house, be appointed for the purpose of investigating the affairs of the State dispensary.

Sec. 2. That said committee shall have the right to employ an expert bookkeeper and a stenographer, to send for persons and papers, to swear witnesses, to require the attendance of any party or parties whose presence shall be deemed necessary and to investigate fully all transactions concerning the management and purchase of wines, liquors, beer, bottles and other supplies for the State dispensary by the State board of directors, and said committee shall have power and authority to take charge of all books and papers and vouchers connected with the State dispensary.

Sec. 3. That said committee at any time they deem it necessary may call to their assistance the attorney general of this State.

Sec. 4. That said committee shall report its findings to the general assembly during the present session if practicable, and if not then to the governor as soon as it may be able to conclude its findings, together with the testimony taken during the investigation.

Sec. 5. That said committee shall begin its investigation at once, and may sit during the recess if deemed desirable.

THE MERRY GO ROUND.

Postoffice Robbed at Walterboro—About \$250 Missing.

[Special to The State.]

Walterboro, Jan. 27.—Safe crackers were in town last night and blew open the safe in the postoffice. Postmaster Levy does not know exactly what his loss is at this time, but says it will not be less than \$250 in money and stamps. The robber broke into Mr. E. P. Knight's blacksmith shop and secured the tools necessary for their work, and after securing their booty left them lying around on the floor in the postoffice.

The explosion occurred about 2:15 this morning and many people heard it, but paid no attention to it, thinking that some mischievous boy had fired a cannon cracker. There is no clue at this time that would lead to the identification or capture of the parties. Some one heard a buggy pass the Henderson house, supposed to be going in the direction of Jacksboro, a few minutes after the explosion.

Men.

Men are born with two eyes, but with one tongue, in order that they shall see twice as much as they say.—Colton.

Men have feelings; this is perhaps the best way of considering them.—Richter.

Nature never meant her secret to be found, and man's a riddle which man can't expound.—Paine.

The man who fails in business, but continues to live in luxury, is a thief.—Spectator.

When a man does a noble act, date him from that. Forget his faults; let his noble act be the standpoint from which you regard him. There is much good in most men.—Dr. Bellows.

The best men are but men. The agency that makes them holy leaves them human; there is nature in them as well as grace.—Tupper.